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## Chapter 6: Marketing

**Marketing is the process of selling goods or services. There are many phases to marketing and different ways to implement a successful program. Philip Kotler, marketing professor of Northwestern University, recommends six O's to successful marketing:**

- Objects of Purchase—What do they buy?
- Objectives of Purchase—Why do they buy it?
- Organization of Purchase—Who buys it?
- Operations of Purchase—How do they buy it?
- Outlets of Purchase—Where do they buy it?
- Occasions of Purchase—When do they buy it?

### Research

Many of these questions can be answered by conducting marketing research—the gathering, recording, and analyzing of information about problems relating to marketing. There are three categories of marketing research: internal information, secondary research, and primary research.

Internal information can be utilized by an existing business. Review your sales records, receipts, complaints, customers' addresses, etc., to determine what your customers will buy.

Secondary research is information already available from government agencies, other firms, and newspapers that costs you little or nothing to obtain.

Primary research is specifically tailored to your needs. You must conduct the research yourself or hire someone else to do it for you. The marketing research process has nine steps:

- Define the problem
- Decide whether marketing research is needed
- Identify objectives
- State specific data to be obtained
- Design the research instrument
- Decide on the sample
- Collect the data
- Tabulate and analyze data
- Draw conclusions and decide on courses of action

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# Marketing and Research Resources

The following is a listing of Virginia government agencies and non-government organizations, along with their resources and services, that may prove useful in developing and implementing a marketing strategy:

## **Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) Economic Information Services (EIS) Division**

The EIS Division of the VEC is a primary source for all types of labor market information (LMI). Go to the VEC's website, [www.VaEmploy.Com](http://www.VaEmploy.Com), for information on:

- Employer Services
- Job Seeker Services
- Labor Market Information
- Unemployment Insurance Services
- Online Services
  - CareerConnect
  - Virginia's Electronic Labor Market Access (VELMA)
  - Automated Labor EXchange (ALEX)
- Virginia Workforce Network

Access the powerful, user-friendly online LMI tool, VELMA at <http://velma.virtuallmi.com>. This system was specifically designed for job seekers, students, employers, training providers, workforce professionals, and others seeking to explore local labor markets in Virginia. VELMA provides fast access to a complete set of employment tools in one website.

Job seekers and students:

- Assess your job skills, set goals, and research training providers
- Research possible career choices online
- Review available jobs and apply online
- Research regional labor market information, such as salaries

Employers:

- Research labor market information on salaries and economic data
- Search for qualified candidates
- Assess the current trends in the Virginia job market when advertising your job openings
- Review the current economic climate for your industry anywhere in Virginia
- Analyze the labor market in areas of Virginia where you may be looking to locate your business

Labor market data:

- Affirmative Action Data on Minority and Women Labor Forces
- Area Profiles
- Commuting Patterns
- Consumer Price Index (CPI)
- Current Employment Statistics (CES)
- *Economic Assumptions*
- *Economic Indicators*
- Education Data
- Income Data
- Industry and Occupational Employment Projections
- Industry Profiles
- Labor Surplus Areas
- Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)
- Occupational Employment Statistics (OES)
- Occupational Profiles
- Population Data
- Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW or ES-202)
- *and more . . .*

The VEC's Labor Market and Demographic Analysis Unit is ready to provide employers specific LMI technical assistance and resources for expansion, relocation, or establishment of a business in Virginia. See Virginia Employment Commission in the Appendix.

### **The Center for Entrepreneurial Development**

The Center for Entrepreneurial Development, a department of the Community College Workforce Alliance (CCWA), offers comprehensive “across-the-board” small business services including start-up assistance, business expansions and turn-around services for struggling businesses. The Center for Entrepreneurial Development's adjunct faculty consists primarily of current and past small business owners—all experts in their individual fields.

Programs include:

- Open enrollment classes and seminars
- Skills and training for employers and employees
- Minority business enterprise assistance
- Spanish language specific courses with bilingual instructors
- Custom-designed contract classes for small- and medium-sized businesses

- Business plan preparation
- One-on-one consulting
- Assistance in providing debt and equity financing contacts
- Food Service Industry Programs including most Certifications

The Center also partners with the Retail University Career Center\* to provide specialized training programs specific to the retail industry. See Center for Entrepreneurial Development in the Appendix.

*\* The Retail University Career Center is a partnership with Longwood University, J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College, John Tyler Community College and the Community College Workforce Alliance. This program is an educational program designed specifically for retailers. CCWA, through the Center for Entrepreneurial Development, offers seminars for retailers ranging from enhancing customer service to loss prevention to developing entrepreneurial business plans.*

## Community Business Partnership

Community Business Partnership (CBP) is a non-profit organization providing assistance to small businesses in Northern Virginia through a variety of programs and activities. Services include training and technical assistance to help start and grow small businesses. Access to capital is available through assistance with loan packaging as well as a micro-lending program for businesses located in Fairfax County.

CBP programs include:

- Business Finance Center
- Business Incubation Center
- South Fairfax Small Business Development Center
- Women's Business Center of Northern Virginia

CBP is a cooperative effort by the U.S. Small Business Administration, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Fairfax County, George Mason University, and Virginia Economic Initiative. See Community Business Partnership in the Appendix.

## Department of Business Assistance

The Department of Business Assistance (DBA) is the state agency devoted solely to the growth and success of business and industry throughout the Commonwealth. The DBA's mission is to serve as state government's principal point of communication with the Virginia business community. The DBA is the one stop businesses need to make to access resources that maximize the potential for success. Services include:

- **Access to Capital:** the DBA administers the Commonwealth's business financing programs through the Virginia Small Business Financing Authority. The Financial Services staff can help structure a deal and identify potential resources to meet the capital needs of business clients.
- **Multilingual Business Services:** the DBA provides information and solutions to promote opportunities for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) business owners

throughout the Commonwealth. Representatives are trained, with the help of interpreters, to assist business owners in more than 150 languages.

- **Small Business Incubator Assistance:** the DBA provides technical assistance to local and regional non-profit groups to establish and operate small business incubators. Small business incubators help entrepreneurs and startup businesses by providing the expertise, networks, and tools needed to make their ventures successful.
- **Virginia Business Information Center:** the Virginia Business Information Center (VBIC) is a one-stop shop for all business-related questions. Businesses can contact the center toll-free or via e-mail for quick answers and sound advice. VBIC assists both established businesses and budding entrepreneurs by providing information about doing business in Virginia, solutions to problems, and referrals to federal, state, and local programs that help businesses prosper. Professional, experienced counselors provide an immediate response to inquiries and direct contacts for available resources.
- **Workforce Training:** the DBA works with new and existing companies to provide customized recruitment and training to qualified workers at all skill levels for newly created jobs. The Workforce Services staff offers consulting services for companies implementing soft-skill, continuous improvement, and specialized training programs.

The agency also coordinates quarterly Virginia Economic Development Seminars and organizes Business Appreciation Week, celebrated statewide each May. See Department of Business Assistance in the Appendix.

## Department of Game and Inland Fisheries

The Department of Game and Inland Fisheries provides for the management, conservation, restoration, and enhancement of the Commonwealth's fish and wildlife resources. The department also provides boat registration and titling services and boating law administration and enforcement, as well as providing public information and education services related to wildlife resources and recreational boating. See Department of Game and Inland Fisheries in the Appendix.

## Department of Minority Business Enterprise

The Virginia Department of Minority Business Enterprise (VDMBE) is dedicated to the establishment, preservation, and strengthening of minority, disadvantaged, and woman-owned businesses throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia.

VDMBE offers professional assistance in the following areas:

- **State Certification** of small-, women-, and minority-owned businesses. Certified businesses have the opportunity to benefit from specialized programs designed to open doors to state and local government contracting opportunities.
- **Procurement Opportunity Bulletin** provides a monthly listing of Commonwealth of Virginia procurement opportunities.
- **Vendors List** consists of names certified firms and is available in electronic format at [www.dbme.state.va.us](http://www.dbme.state.va.us) and [www.eva.state.va.us](http://www.eva.state.va.us).

- **Management and Technical Assistance** through VDMBE's Service Division are provided to small-, minority-, disadvantaged-, and women-owned firms seeking to engage in public and private sector's projects.
- **Financial Assistance** available through the Providing Access to Capital for Entrepreneurs Program (P.A.C.E.) provides access to capital for Virginia businesses by encouraging lenders in Virginia to make loans to economically disadvantaged businesses. A current list of Virginia lenders participating in P.A.C.E. is available through VDMBE.
- **Outreach and Marketing** provides direct and indirect services to increase the contracting opportunities of small-, women-, and minority-owned businesses. This division identifies and develops marketing strategies with entrepreneurs to promote procurement by federal, state, and local governments as well as private industry.

See Department of Minority Business Enterprise in the Appendix.

## **Hampton Roads Agricultural Research and Extension Center**

The purpose of this center is to provide information about research conducted on ornamental plants (flowers and shrubs) with the primary aim of benefiting the commercial nursery industry, including information on areas of research on variety development, pest control, soil fertility, chemical growth regulation, and cultural practices. See Hampton Roads Agricultural Research and Extension Center in the Appendix.

## **Metropolitan Business League**

The Metropolitan Business League (MBL) is a not-for-profit business membership organization dedicated to minority business development in the Richmond metropolitan area. All of MBL's programs and services are designed to assist and promote existing as well as start-up businesses. Originally organized to assist contractors, restaurant owners, and service companies, MBL has expanded its membership to include physicians, law firms, marketing agencies, computer companies, and many others. Some services provided by MBL include business plan development and counseling, workshops and seminars, advocacy and networking, scholarships to executive business institutes, request for proposals review, and a technology resource center. See Metropolitan Business League in the Appendix.

## **New Visions, New Ventures**

New Visions, New Ventures has a Women's Business Center that is partially funded by the U.S. Small Business Administration, the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development and Capital One. New Visions, New Ventures offers:

- Training
- Technical assistance and counseling
- Access to capital
- Mentoring and networking
- Computer and internet access

See New Visions, New Ventures in the Appendix.

## **Service Corps of Retired Executives**

The Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) are volunteer business professionals willing and able to share their experiences through counseling and training. Their primary goal is to improve the operation of existing small business owners and managers, and to advise persons interested in going into business. Continued promotion of their services is vital to increasing the number of clients and maintaining a productive corps. Volunteers are recruited to meet the specific needs of the business community and the SCORE chapter. Each alliance is carefully designed to match the volunteer's skills, providing a meaningful experience to the volunteer and a contribution to the development of small firms. The SCORE chapters are indicated under the U.S. Small Business Administration in the Appendix.

## **Small Business Development Centers**

The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Network is the most extensive business development program in the Commonwealth. There are 29 local SBDCs across Virginia, providing professional business counseling, training, and information resources to help grow and strengthen Virginia businesses. SBDC professionals assist with business planning, marketing, financial analysis, access to capital, business start-up, and other specialized services, as requested. The Virginia SBDC network is a partnership between the U.S. Small Business Administration, George Mason University, and local sponsors including universities, community colleges, chambers of commerce, municipalities, economic development organizations, and private companies. See Small Business Development Centers in the Appendix.

## **U.S. Small Business Administration**

The U.S. Small Business Administration (U.S. SBA) issues a wide range of marketing and technical publications designed to help owner-managers and prospective owners of small businesses. See U.S. Small Business Administration in the Appendix.

## **Virginia Chamber of Commerce**

The Virginia Chamber of Commerce is a private, nonprofit membership organization dedicated to promoting Virginia's business climate and living environment. This goal is accomplished through the efforts of the business, professional, and educational individuals who serve on a volunteer basis as officers and on committees to establish policy. Full-time professional staff carry out the policy of the membership and provide services to the members. The services offered by the Virginia Chamber of Commerce include:

- Representation of members' interests at the Virginia General Assembly
- Business research and information
- Information and promotion
- Liaison with local chambers
- Management relations services
- Industrial development and labor research
- World trade promotion

- Legislative conferences
- Public and private education involvement
- Legislative reports

A list of local chambers is included in the Appendix under Virginia Chamber of Commerce.

## **Virginia Community College System**

The Virginia Community College System provides services and activities for small businesses. The type of services and activities are varied in each location. See Virginia Community College System in the Appendix.

## **Virginia Economic Development Partnership**

The Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) was created by the Virginia General Assembly with a principal mission to foster the growth of Virginia's economy through expansion of the state's tax base and increasing higher-income employment opportunities. VEDP carries out its mission by conducting an aggressive business recruitment program, providing expansion assistance to Virginia businesses, and promoting international trade opportunities for Virginia firms. The Partnership can provide a single point of contact for companies seeking site location assistance through its Business Development Division. Staff can provide extensive information on labor availability and costs, available office and industrial buildings and sites, utilities, transportation services, business financing, state and local taxes, and the business climate. The VEDP website, which is [www.yesvirginia.org](http://www.yesvirginia.org), provides a wealth of information online, including contact information, to assist a prospective business with its site selection needs. VEDP's corporate site selection services are free to businesses and are conducted in complete confidentiality. The International Trade Division can provide expert, cost-effective export assistance for companies seeking to increase international sales of goods and services.

Publications available include:

- *Beyond Virginia: A World of Trade Opportunities*
- *Commerce Quarterly*
- *Employment Creation and Capital Investment in Virginia*
- *A Guide to Business Incentives*
- *A Guide to Establishing a Business in Virginia*
- *A Guide to Local Taxes on Business*
- *International Trade: Global Market Research Program*
- *International Trade: Overseas Trade Offices*
- *International Trade: Programs and Services*
- *International Trade: Virginia Leaders in Export Trade (VALET)*



- *Virginia Advantage: Facts for Business Decisions*
- *Virginia Advantage: Fast Facts*
- *Virginia Advantage: Profile of Services*
- *Virginia: A Business Climate Where the Financial Services Industry Can Grow and Prosper*
- *Virginia: Clearing the Track for a Pace-Setting Motorsports Industry*
- *Virginia Firms With Foreign Affiliations*
- *Virginia: Inviting the Aerospace Industry to Come Grow With Us*
- *Virginia: Leading the Nation in Information Technology and Telecommunications*
- *Virginia: A Powerful Resource for Electronics Manufacturers*
- *Virginia: The Strategic Advantage in the Business of Distribution*
- *Virginia Wants to Say One Word To You, Just One Word . . . Plastics*
- *Virginia: Where the Automotive Industry Finds a Fast Lane to Growth*
- *Virginia: Where Bioscience Finds a Culture for Growth*
- *Virginia: Where Food Processors Find All the Right Ingredients for Growth*
- *Virginia: Where Microelectronics Manufacturers Find Everything Conductive to Semiconductors*

See Virginia Economic Development Partnership in the Appendix.

### **Virginia Minority Supplier Development Council**

The Virginia Minority Supplier Development (VMSDC) is a statewide membership organization of major corporations, financial institutions, government agencies, universities and Virginia based companies that are interested in doing business with minority-owned companies. The primary purpose of VMSDC is to promote and facilitate the development of business relationships between its members and certified minority business enterprises. The Council certifies minority-owned businesses and assists them with identifying corporate members to whom they can market their products and services. A variety of programs and services are offered to our corporate representatives and minority entrepreneurs, i.e. business opportunity fairs, educational seminars, bid-matching, scholarships to executive management programs, and publications. See Virginia Minority Supplier Development Council in the Appendix.

### **Virginia Tourism Corporation**

The Virginia Tourism Corporation markets the Commonwealth's tourism assets to target domestic and international visitors and motion-picture productions. Services include providing travel data information and technical advice regarding advertising, promotion, marketing and other elements of tourism. See Virginia Tourism Corporation in the Appendix.

## Women in Business

A major goal of the U.S. SBA is to assist women in becoming successful entrepreneurs. Workshops and seminars are held around the state to teach women how to get into business and to help them expand an existing business. A “women’s representative” has been designated in each U.S. SBA office.

## Women’s Business Center of Northern Virginia

A program of the Community Business Partnership and sponsored by the U.S. SBA and Fairfax County Office for Women, Women’s Business Center of Northern Virginia provides training and technical assistance to women-owned small businesses. Assistance is formulated to meet the special needs of women business owners by providing support and networking opportunities as well as technical assistance. See Women’s Business Center of Northern Virginia in the Appendix.

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## Pricing Products and Services

It is the market, not your costs, that determines the price at which you can sell your product or service. The price you charge should be between the base price (your cost) and the maximum amount for which you could sell your product or service. The price you ask for your product or service should include the following:

- Profit—price determines profit margin
- Recouping investment—price determines the speed at which you recover your investment
- Resources available for promotion—price determines resources available to compete in the marketplace
- Penetrating a new market—price determines success in getting into a new market
- Image—price creates image of status/quality or economy

When pricing a new product, you should consider:

- Your objective
  - Get a return on investment
  - Stabilize price and profit margin
  - Capture a target market share
  - Meet or prevent competition
  - Maximize profit
- Demand versus the price
  - Customers’ opinions

- Comparison to substitutes or replacements
- Cost savings
- Test marketing

■ Basic pricing strategy

- Skimming (high price)—use when there is little or no competition
- Penetration (low price)—use to get into a new market
- Meet-the-competition—same price as competition but offer something different (quality of product is better; service is friendlier)

Discount policies can also affect sales. Discount policy may be classified as follows:

- Promotional discount
- Trade discount—usually offered by a manufacturer to the retailer or wholesaler
- Quantity discount for larger orders

## Consumer Services

### Better Business Bureau

The Better Business Bureau (BBB) is a private, self-regulatory agency that works toward fostering ethical advertising and selling practices. The bureau provides background information about a company as well as its complaint history.

An individual may telephone the BBB at any of the statewide offices and obtain information regarding the BBB's dealings with a given firm. The bureau handles consumer complaints and offers an arbitration program for dispute settlement. Services are free of charge. Membership in the BBB is by invitation, and it is contingent upon the business maintaining a good record of ethical practices. See the Appendix for a list of the Better Business Bureau offices.

### Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Consumer Protection, Office of Consumer Affairs

The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS), Office of Consumer Affairs (OCA), provides consumer protection against fraudulent, deceptive, and illegal practices. OCA's free services include:

- Investigating and using alternative dispute resolution to handle consumer complaints, placing emphasis on investigation of cases that involve a violation of consumer protection laws and that affect a large number of consumers, or have a high-dollar loss
- Maintaining a 3-year history of consumer complaints and their outcome, available to callers through a staff of telephone counselors
- Administering, in addition to the Consumer Protection Act, the Virginia Solicitation

of Contributions Law; the Virginia Membership Camping Act; the Virginia Health Spa Act; the Virginia Credit Services Business Act; the Virginia Travel Club Act, and Extended Service Contract Act

- Referring complaints to the proper state, federal, or local agency for processing
- Informing consumers about deceptive sales practices and consumer fraud, consumer protection laws, and their rights as consumers

Consumers can search OCA's complaint base, check the registration status of charitable organizations and professional fundraisers and obtain a complaint form on the agency's website at [www.vdac.virginia.gov](http://www.vdac.virginia.gov). A consumer complaint form is also available by calling or writing VDACS. See Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

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## Trade Shows

Sales can be boosted by participating in trade shows. Trade and industry magazines are a good source of upcoming trade shows and conventions. Once you have decided on a show, contact the management firm of the show and request information on the specifics of the event. If you are not familiar with some of the requirements, contact prior exhibitors and discuss your interest with them.

Your display area at the show is an advertisement for your business. Within your budget, you must have an exhibit to attract attention and interest. Feature a unique item. Publicize your attendance at the trade show. Follow up on business prospects from the show.

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## Associations

Professional and business organizations can assist new and existing businesses. They are valuable information sources that focus on new business developments, management techniques, and the competitive environment. The most important aspect in dealing with professional, business, and civic organizations is the opportunity to meet individuals in your field of business. The communication exchange can be invaluable. For a list of business, professional, and civic associations in your area, contact your local Chamber of Commerce.

### Asian American Business Assistance Center

The mission of the Asian American Business Assistance Center (AABAC) is to foster, increase, and maximize the economic potential of Virginia's Asian American businesses by supporting their domestic and international business development efforts in the global economy. AABAC helps link current and prospective Asian American companies to business technical assistance, capital financing resources, contract opportunities, professional development opportunities, and mentoring activities to help them maximize their business potentials.

AABAC is a not-for-profit membership organization with headquarters in Hanover County and chapters in the Henrico County, Warren County, Charlottesville city, Richmond city, and Virginia Beach city.

Services include:

- Business networking opportunities with Asian American business owners in Virginia.
- *The Dominion Asia Review*: monthly Asian business newsletter with updated diversity business reports and data.
- Assistance in identifying financing, bonding, and insurance options.
- Referrals to contract and procurement opportunities in the private and public sector.
- Technical assistance, procurement seminars, diversity business roundtables, minority business certifications, and short-term industry training events.
- Diversity job fairs and recruitment events.
- Business intelligence: List of Virginia headquarters, small incubators (private and public) and venture capital resources.
- Counseling services for immigrants and small businesses facing language barriers and unfamiliarity with the American way of doing business.
- Referrals to English as a Second Language (ESL) classes.
- Business re-location/site-selection.
- AABAC international and domestic business Internship opportunities in collaboration with higher education.

See Asian American Business Assistance Center in the Appendix.

## Retail Merchants Association

The Retail Merchants Association (RMA), which was founded in 1906, is a not-for-profit trade association representing retailers and related businesses in Central Virginia. Its mission is to enhance the image and profitability of member companies through advocacy, information, and networking opportunities.

The RMA represents the business interests of the retail community with local and state officials. By taking advantage of the networking opportunities provided by RMA, members are able to interact with peers, fellow entrepreneurs, and service providers.

Benefits of membership in the RMA include:

- **E-mail Alert System:** This system transmits information to businesses and security professionals regarding crimes affecting them. Information is supplied by local and state law enforcement, FBI, Secret Service, U. S. Postal Inspection Service, financial institutions and businesses.
- **First Friday Forums:** These breakfast meetings are held the first Friday of each month and feature an informative speaker and member networking opportunities.
- **Labor Law Information Service:** Retail members can receive answers to general questions via telephone regarding Virginia labor and employment laws.
- **Meeting Facilities:** Meeting rooms are available to members at no cost, for staff training, workshops and seminars.

- **Orion Pre-employment Surveys:** These comprehensive opinion surveys, which measure specific job-relevant attitudes and experiences, serve as a valuable tool in the hiring process.

See Retail Merchants Association in the Appendix.

### **Richmond Association for Business Economics**

The Richmond Association for Business Economics (RABE) was founded in 1984 to bring together individuals from all areas of business throughout the Richmond area. Members meet throughout the year to discuss issues of common interest, share experiences and ideas, highlight the contributions that business economics can make in the workplace, and to promote research and further study of economic issues, as they relate to public policy. See Richmond Association for Business Economics in the Appendix.

### **Virginia Manufacturers Association**

The Virginia Manufacturers Association (VMA) is a trade association of Virginia's leading manufacturers. It was established in 1922 to advocate for balanced and reasonable laws, regulations, and policies affecting manufacturers. The VMA is the only Virginia association that is exclusively dedicated to the shared vision of manufacturers and their allies. See Virginia Manufacturers Association in the Appendix.

### **Virginia Retail Merchants Association**

The Virginia Retail Merchants Association (VRMA), which was established in 1905, is a not-for-profit trade association representing retailers to educate, inform, and serve as a resource. VRMA and its retail member associations represent more than 5,400 retailers and other associated businesses throughout the Commonwealth of Virginia. See Virginia Retail Merchants Association in the Appendix.

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## **Doing Business With Federal, State, or Local Government**

### ***Commerce Business Daily***

The *Commerce Business Daily*, published by the U.S. Department of Commerce, is a valuable source of information to identify products and services that individual procurement offices currently plan to buy. The document is published Monday through Friday and is available by subscription only. See Superintendent of Documents in the Appendix.

### **Crater Procurement Assistance Center**

The Crater Procurement Assistance Center is a Department of Defense Procurement Technical Assistance Center located at the Crater Planning District Commission in Petersburg. Its mission is to provide training, technical assistance, and counseling to companies with an interest in doing business with federal, state, and local government agencies, or as a subcontractor to major prime contractors. The Crater Procurement Assistance Center helps businesses identify

opportunities in the government marketplace, learn how to respond to those opportunities and learn how to successfully complete government contracts. The center also allows businesses to better understand the government contracting process, the regulations and requirements, and other information necessary for them to successfully network in the government environment. See Crater Procurement Center in the Appendix.

### **eVA—Virginia Business Opportunities**

No matter how large or small your company is, you are probably making a product or providing a service purchased by the Commonwealth of Virginia. At eVA, the Commonwealth of Virginia's e-procurement solution, you will find a comprehensive online publication of business opportunities ([www.eva.virginia.gov](http://www.eva.virginia.gov)). On a daily basis, state and local government buyers post solicitation notices for a wide range of products and services they plan to purchase. This service is provided by the Department of General Services at no cost to the business community. See Department of General Services in the Appendix.

### **Procurement Resource Guide**

This publication is a marketing guide produced for certified minority firms by the Department of Minority Business Enterprise that contains information regarding the state's procurement program and the major purchasing agencies. It lists the procurement agent and the product/service each agency buys. The booklet is a valuable marketing tool for potential and existing state vendors. See Department of Minority Business Enterprise in the Appendix.

### **Selling to the Military**

This manual provides information on defense procurement. Major buying offices along with their needs are listed for the entire United States. This manual can be used to locate procurement offices that may utilize your firm's product or services. See Superintendent of Documents in the Appendix.

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## **Export Sales**

### **Division of International Trade**

This division of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership offers a number of services designed to eliminate red tape and assist Virginia companies in establishing overseas markets.

The following are some of the services available to Virginia manufacturers:

- Individual consulting on export marketing
- International trade shows and missions
- International market research

See Virginia Economic Development Partnership in the Appendix.

## **U.S. Department of Commerce**

The U.S. Department of Commerce, through its network of domestic offices and foreign locations, has the primary federal responsibility for promotion of U.S. commercial interest abroad. Trade specialists in the district offices and U.S. embassies and consulates offer expert assistance to small businesses interested in exporting. These services include: helping companies to assess their export potential and develop an export strategy; utilizing data and market research to target the best markets; assisting in participation in major trade events; identifying overseas trading partners; facilitating overseas travel; hosting trade events; helping to resolve trade complaints; and offering customized trade support services.

U.S. businesses are also counseled on export financing, documentation, insurance, and other services that are available from other U.S. agencies. See U.S. Department of Commerce in the Appendix.

## **Virginia Port Authority**

Newport News Marine Terminal, Norfolk International Terminals, Portsmouth Marine Terminal, and the Virginia Inland Port in Warren County, VA, comprise the Virginia Port Authority. The authority is responsible for promoting Virginia world trade; influencing the routing of cargoes through the Commonwealth's port facilities; assisting Virginia business in its efforts to import and export raw materials and finished products; and maintaining a liaison with government and private agencies engaged in international commerce.

The authority offers programs and services on general and technical information on international shipping and assistance in locating overseas markets for Virginia products. The authority's facilities are able to handle any type of cargo, in any quantity, at competitive costs, and also provide information on steamship, rail, and trade services.

Virginia's manufacturers and businesses involved in world trade activities and any firm or individual desiring information on world trade activities are eligible for these services. See Virginia Port Authority in the Appendix.